

Intimacy: The Road to Wholeness



Intimacy for men is often confusing and bewildering. If we listen to the general world, women believe that it is merely a case of our being more vulnerable, whereas men would suggest that it involves sexual closeness. In

reality, intimacy for men is the ability to balance presence with vulnerability. Too much presence leads to a stoic, mechanical existence with little real relationship with others. Too much vulnerability leads to a sense of over-exposure, embarrassment, and possibly humiliation.

The Paradox of Intimacy

In terms of intimacy, a paradox occurs when two people fuse together to share a powerful moment. Typically, both are fully present and yet slightly vulnerable. Safe, and yet revealing. It is as if they are drawing upon their internal awareness and authority to be safely in their own identity while allowing some else to see and know them in a very private and personal way—ergo, the everyday translation of intimacy of “into me thee see”, “a lifting of the veil between us”, and “the experience of being fully seen for the first time”.

Male Identity Issues

For men, the ability to fully develop an identity is complicated. Generally portrayed masculine identity often masks the need for intimacy, “inasmuch as intimacy elicits tenderness, compassion, empathy, and nurturance, feelings associated with the feminine self. Therefore, intimacy can be highly threatening to some men’s gender identity, resulting in their denouncing anything perceived as feminine and therefore any need for intimacy. Furthermore, because intimacy requires a fusion with another, it can be perceived as extremely dangerous to the psyche (death fear) as it is experienced not only as a loss of control but a loss of self. As a result, men often become extremely aloof, independent and self-sufficient to avoid any semblance of intimacy; ergo weakness.

Finding the Sacred

Intimacy is holy or sacred in that it brings us in contact with that which is core to our humanity, beyond the profane and into the liminal. A veil lifts and surrounds the moment with a connecting experience, one to another, that touches the heart and soul of the person. It might be in joy or sadness, but predominantly, it is a shared knowing between two people. For myself, I believe that amidst all of the complexities of life, the one commonly sought experience, often without conscious knowing, is to experience one’s existence being validating by another often via an intimate moment.

When

Intimacy: The Road to Wholeness will occur October 2-5, 2008. Start-up is 9:00 AM on Thursday, October 2nd with a brief hello and get to know each other before we build our village and homes for the weekend.

Costs

Intimacy: The Road to Wholeness workshop is \$600 per person. There is a \$100 discount per person, if paid in full by July 1, 2008. **Mail checks to:** Cleveland Consulting Group, Inc. at 9796 Cedar Road, Novelty, Ohio 44072-9747

Supplies

Food and tents are provided for the weekend. However, all sleeping gear, eating utensils, and personal items must be brought to the weekend. In addition, we are asking that each **Man** bring 2-3 gallons of water that will be used for drinking and washing stations.

Facilitator

The weekend will be facilitated by Herb Stevenson, President of the Cleveland Consulting Group, Inc and founder of the Medicine of Men program. Details of his biographical background can be found at <http://Natural-Passages.com> Additional skilled facilitators will be brought in as needed. Contact Herb at **440/338-1705** or email MenofMedicine@aol.com

